

CATALOGUE NO. 6321.0

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INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES, AUSTRALIA, SEPTEMBER 1989

PHONE INQUIRIES

- *about these statistics and the availability of related unpublished statistics*—contact Fiona Blackshaw on Canberra (062) 52 6561 or any ABS State office.
- *about other statistics and ABS services*—contact Information Services on Canberra (062) 52 6007, 52 6627, 52 5402 or any ABS State office.

MAIL INQUIRIES

- *write to Information Services, ABS, PO Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616 or any ABS State office.*

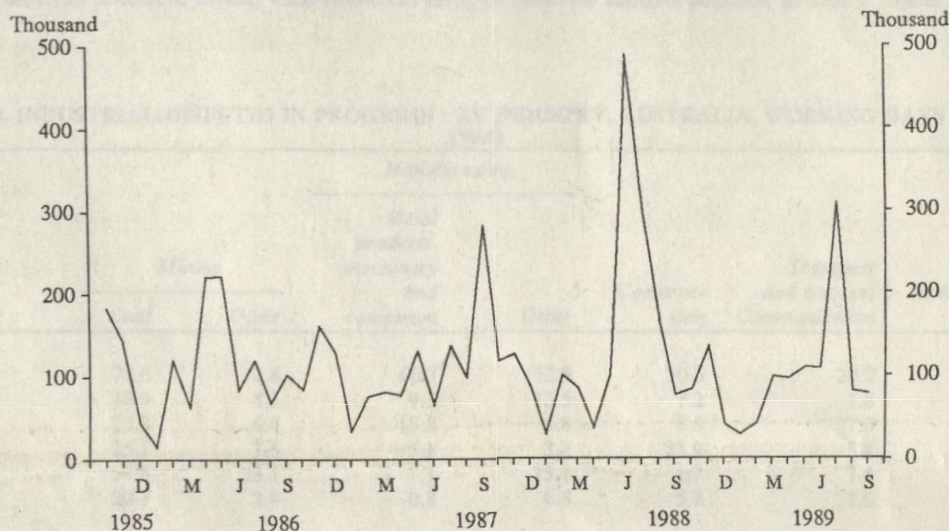
ELECTRONIC SERVICES

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NOTE: Industrial dispute statistics for August 1989 include statistics of the number of employees involved and working days lost as a result of the domestic pilots dispute. Estimates only include details of time lost for the period prior to the pilots' resignations. From that time, in accordance with ABS definitions, the pilots action was not within scope of this collection as the pilots were no longer employees. In addition, these statistics do not include details of any secondary effects of the pilots dispute, i.e. stand-downs that may have occurred in other industries as a result of the dispute, as these are not in the scope of the collection (refer to paragraph 2 of the Explanatory Notes on page 6).

MAIN FEATURES

WORKING DAYS LOST, AUSTRALIA



In September 1989—

- 96 disputes were reported in progress involving 81,900 employees.
- 78,700 working days were lost, a slight decrease on August 1989 levels (81,400) and the lowest since February 1989 (42,800).
- The Coal mining industry (6,800) recorded the lowest monthly level of working days lost in that industry since April 1988 (3,500).

In the 12 months ended September 1989—

- 1,455 disputes were reported in progress involving 659,500 employees and the loss of 1,213,500 working days.
- 194 working days were lost per thousand employees compared with 283 and 232 for the 12 month period ending September 1988 and 1987 respectively.

- The Coal mining industry recorded 7,916 working days lost per thousand employees, the lowest since the 12 month period ended August 1987 (6,058).
- 1,445 disputes were reported as ending during the period involving 584,200 employees and the loss of 1,096,000 working days.
- Of the 1,445 disputes ending —
 - 983 (68.0%) were of 1 day's duration or less, accounting for 79.2% (462,600) of employees involved and 38.0% (416,200) of working days lost;

- 868 (60.1%) were resolved by resumption without negotiation; and
- 637 (44.1%) concerned disputes over

managerial policy, involving 233,800 (40.0%) employees and 548,000 (50.0%) working days lost.

NOTES

The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector) and trade unions concerning individual disputes, and from reports of government authorities.

The statistics relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred.

Explanatory Notes and a Glossary are published on pages 6 to 8 of this publication.

IAN CASTLES
Australian Statistician



TABLE 1. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : AUSTRALIA(a)

Period	Number of disputes(b)		Employees involved ('000)		Working days lost ('000)
	Commenced in period	Total(c)	Newly involved(d)	Total(c)	
1988—					
July	91	107	117.5	192.8	297.8
August	142	151	107.1	116.2	166.2
September	109	121	33.7	49.7	76.3
October	139	151	36.6	41.1	83.3
November	150	167	51.8	59.0	136.1
December	71	93	15.1	25.8	41.4
1989—					
January	106	115	25.4	28.4	29.1
February	138	153	23.5	25.4	42.8
March	130	146	37.8	40.7	98.2
April	124	135	50.2	53.4	95.8
May	135	156	46.8	52.8	109.2
June r	116	135	48.9	54.4	108.7
July r	137	159	220.1	235.2	308.8
August r	113	132	32.3	57.0	81.4
September	84	96	66.4	81.9	78.7
Twelve months ended—					
September 1987	r1,558	r1,577	563.5	568.3	1,356.2
1988 r	1,534	1,549	971.9	975.7	1,711.5
1989	1,443	1,455	655.0	659.5	1,213.5
December 1986	1,747	1,754	673.9	691.7	1,390.7
1987	1,512	1,517	593.4	608.8	1,311.9
1988	1,502	1,508	893.9	894.4	1,641.4

(a) More detailed information by State and industry is available on request. (b) See paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes. (c) Refers to all disputes in progress during the period. (d) Comprises employees involved in disputes which commenced during the month and additional employees involved in disputes which continued from the previous month.

TABLE 2. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : BY INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST(a)

Period	Manufacturing							
	Mining		Metal products, machinery and equipment	Other	Construction	Transport and storage; Communication	Other industries (b)	All industries
	Coal	Other						
1988—								
July	77.6	3.8	66.7	33.9	30.5	20.0	65.3	297.8
August	18.9	8.3	9.3	13.5	7.2	1.8	107.2	166.2
September	25.3	6.4	15.8	5.8	8.8	7.0	7.2	76.3
October	25.1	7.6	5.1	3.2	23.9	5.4	13.0	83.3
November	57.5	33.1	7.3	15.1	1.7	7.4	14.0	136.1
December	20.7	2.8	0.8	6.8	5.7	1.0	3.6	41.4
1989—								
January	8.7	2.2	2.4	3.6	2.2	5.7	4.3	29.1
February	8.9	1.5	14.4	8.0	2.4	3.0	4.7	42.8
March	12.7	4.4	13.1	44.2	6.5	14.4	3.0	98.2
April	7.7	2.0	19.0	1.9	7.3	1.0	57.0	95.8
May	28.0	2.8	29.3	11.3	13.8	6.8	17.1	109.2
June	22.9	9.2	32.2	20.3	13.3	r3.0	7.8	r108.7
July	r25.5	r2.0	57.2	19.1	43.3	11.5	150.4	r308.8
August	r12.7	2.2	22.2	13.0	4.7	6.7	r20.0	r81.4
September	6.8	3.0	3.5	20.3	4.6	3.0	37.4	78.7
Twelve months ended—								
September 1987	294.4	71.6	213.4	184.4	190.6	38.9	363.0	1,356.2
1988 r	417.1	60.4	325.4	160.9	202.4	118.4	426.8	1,711.5
1989	237.1	72.8	206.6	166.7	129.5	68.8	332.1	1,213.5
December 1986	362.0	179.4	187.4	205.3	117.7	57.6	281.4	1,390.7
1987	291.8	55.7	199.6	195.5	194.5	92.5	282.3	1,311.9
1988	471.3	97.4	309.5	117.4	207.9	75.0	362.9	1,641.4

(a) More detailed industry information is available on request. (b) Comprises Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Electricity, gas and water; Wholesale and retail trade; Finance, property and business services; Public administration and defence; Community services; Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 3. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : STATES AND TERRITORIES, AUSTRALIA, WORKING DAYS LOST(a)
(^{'000})

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
1988—									
July	48.6	181.8	49.8	4.7	9.7	2.9	—	0.2	297.8
August	120.5	21.2	6.8	4.1	7.3	3.5	1.7	1.2	166.2
September	30.2	22.7	12.8	0.6	9.1	0.1	—	0.8	76.3
October	31.7	7.4	11.3	1.1	30.2	0.8	0.5	0.3	83.3
November	59.9	10.1	30.3	1.0	33.2	0.7	0.2	0.8	136.1
December	21.4	11.6	2.8	1.6	2.9	—	1.1	—	41.4
1989—									
January	13.7	2.0	8.1	0.9	2.0	1.1	0.9	0.5	29.1
February	20.3	5.8	11.8	2.2	2.0	0.1	0.6	—	42.8
March	61.1	20.4	6.6	6.1	2.8	0.2	0.6	0.4	98.2
April	38.2	19.0	6.2	4.0	23.8	3.4	1.0	0.2	95.8
May	52.8	36.1	3.8	0.3	15.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	109.2
June	r54.6	34.9	5.2	3.3	10.5	—	0.1	—	r108.7
July	r180.2	103.8	4.0	2.8	15.0	1.3	r0.9	0.9	r308.8
August	r37.2	19.7	r10.7	5.0	6.3	0.4	0.3	1.7	r81.4
September	27.9	18.2	10.4	3.0	14.0	0.1	1.8	3.3	78.7
Twelve months ended—									
September 1987	649.7	403.0	79.1	45.2	131.9	25.6	7.6	14.2	1,356.2
1988	r814.6	r407.3	r277.5	52.4	109.5	25.1	8.0	17.1	r1,711.5
1989	598.9	289.0	111.3	31.3	158.0	8.4	8.1	8.5	1,213.5
December 1986	598.8	381.8	173.3	46.3	143.1	29.2	11.8	6.5	1,390.7
1987	744.8	281.4	73.7	44.6	115.3	28.0	6.5	17.5	1,311.9
1988	730.1	362.6	299.5	47.0	160.6	18.6	8.9	14.1	1,641.4

(a) State by industry information is available on request.

TABLE 4. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : BY INDUSTRY, AUSTRALIA,
WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES(a)

Period	Manufacturing							
	Mining		Metal products, machinery and equipment	Other	Construction	Transport and storage; Communication	Other industries (b)	All industries
	Coal	Other						
Twelve months ended—								
1985—								
December	6,892	1,928	256	312	666	430	71	228
1986—								
December	10,741	3,328	445	328	458	135	72	242
1987—								
December	8,920	1,072	479	305	743	217	70	223
1987—								
September	r8,805	r1,404	512	290	739	91	90	r232
1988—								
July	15,761	1,001	819	264	858	278	107	308
August	15,912	1,040	807	252	835	274	126	318
September	13,626	1,107	790	251	721	280	101	283
October	13,977	1,163	771	235	732	230	98	276
November	15,198	1,742	764	213	712	237	88	277
December	15,548	1,777	750	183	725	177	85	269
1989—								
January	r15,562	r1,808	r750	r187	r703	187	84	r268
February	14,330	1,629	763	187	684	186	82	r258
March	13,636	1,521	784	242	653	209	80	259
April	13,793	r1,503	r819	r244	r652	204	89	267
May	13,812	1,488	842	253	596	212	90	268
June	10,471	1,556	515	260	418	r178	70	206
July	r8,738	r1,522	492	237	459	157	89	r208
August	r8,530	r1,411	522	235	448	168	69	r194
September	7,916	1,347	492	257	432	158	76	194

(a) See paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes. (b) Comprises Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; Electricity, gas and water; Wholesale and retail trade; Finance, property and business services; Public administration and defence; Community services; Recreation, personal and other services.

TABLE 5. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES IN PROGRESS : STATES AND TERRITORIES, AUSTRALIA,
WORKING DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYEES(a)

Period	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
<i>Twelve months ended—</i>									
1985—									
December	209	236	411	48	188	138	213	159	228
1986—									
December	304	240	207	95	272	190	199	55	242
1987—									
December	366	172	87	91	213	177	110	143	223
1987—									
September	r323	r249	94	92	r244	r163	126	116	r232
1988—									
July	414	272	315	116	270	164	134	132	308
August	459	254	316	114	257	173	163	139	318
September	384	243	318	105	204	160	142	137	283
October	368	224	324	98	247	156	143	118	276
November	354	223	338	95	296	152	142	118	277
December	341	214	336	93	299	118	158	112	269
1989—									
January	r342	213	r327	94	r296	r123	164	r117	r268
February	322	210	329	88	277	117	153	112	r258
March	337	214	309	98	250	97	137	108	259
April	350	216	309	r103	283	108	r148	99	267
May	356	233	261	98	302	104	138	97	268
June	256	215	165	59	276	82	117	38	206
July	316	170	116	55	285	72	r130	44	r208
August	277	169	119	56	283	53	r106	48	r194
September	276	166	116	61	292	53	135	69	194

(a) See paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes.

TABLE 6. INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ENDING IN THE 12 MONTHS TO SEPTEMBER 1989 : AUSTRALIA,
CAUSE, DURATION AND METHOD OF SETTLEMENT(a)

	Number of disputes	Employees involved (directly and indirectly) (^{'000})	Working days lost (^{'000})
CAUSE OF DISPUTE			
Wages	179	96.7	150.4
Hours of work	27	19.7	29.9
Leave, pensions, compensation	67	31.0	79.5
Managerial policy	637	233.8	548.0
Physical working conditions	265	36.1	92.8
Trade unionism	229	44.1	72.6
Other(b)	41	122.8	122.8
Total	1,445	584.2	1,096.0
DURATION OF DISPUTE			
Up to and including 1 day	983	462.6	416.2
Over 1 to 2 days	170	42.9	92.8
Over 2 and less than 5 days	135	40.1	155.7
5 and less than 10 days	96	20.5	137.6
10 and less than 20 days	47	14.3	192.6
20 days and over	14	3.7	101.0
Total	1,445	584.2	1,096.0
METHOD OF SETTLEMENT			
Negotiation	253	63.9	169.5
State legislation	113	33.4	127.3
Federal and joint Federal-State legislation	196	51.6	314.2
Resumption without negotiation	868	429.9	454.3
Other methods	15	5.4	30.7
Total	1,445	584.2	1,096.0

(a) More detailed information by State and industry is available on request. (b) Includes disputes not elsewhere categorised.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The statistics in this publication relate to disputes which involved stoppages of work of ten working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred. Ten working days is equivalent to the amount of ordinary time worked by ten people in one day, regardless of the length of stoppage, for example, 3,000 workers on strike for 2 hours would be counted as 750 working days lost (assuming they work an 8 hour day).

2. The statistics of working days lost relate to the losses due to industrial disputes only (as defined in paragraph 2 of the Glossary). Effects on other establishments, such as stand-downs because of lack of materials, disruption of transport services, power cuts, etc. are not included.

3. The statistics of industrial disputes are compiled mainly from data obtained from employers (both private and public sector), from trade unions and from reports of government authorities. Particulars of some stoppages may have been estimated and the statistics therefore should be regarded as giving only a broad measure of the extent of industrial disputes as defined above.

Change in methodology

4. The basis for the calculation of working days lost per thousand employees was changed in January 1987 to include estimates of employees from the Survey of Employment and Earnings. They are combined with estimates of the number of employees in agriculture and in private households, obtained from the Labour Force Survey. Estimates have been recalculated on this basis for each month back to June 1984 and are available on request. In issues of this publication prior to January 1987, the estimates of numbers of employees were based entirely on Labour Force Survey data. The effect of the change is minimal at the 'all industries' level but is quite significant, in some cases, for individual industry groups.

5. The basis for the calculation of the number of disputes was changed in December 1987 (see paragraph 2 of the Glossary). Before that date, where the causes of several disputes were the same (e.g. National Wage Case disputes) the disputes were counted as one dispute in each State or Territory in which they occurred, irrespective of whether they were directed or organised by one person or organisation, or whether the dispute occurred in more than one industry. The reason for the change was to align the method of counting the number of disputes with the International Labour Organisation guidelines. In accordance with this change in definition, estimates of the number of disputes shown in this bulletin for past periods have been revised. In issues of this publication prior to September 1988, the number of disputes were counted on the old basis. Unpublished estimates of the number of disputes have been revised on the new basis from January 1985 and are available on request. The number of employees involved and working days lost remain unchanged.

Reliability of estimates

6. Inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in information provided by respondents or in processing by the ABS. Inaccuracies of this kind are referred to as non-sampling errors. Although considerable care is taken in questionnaire design; in the instructions given to employers; and in editing the returns; these inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample.

Other ABS publications

7. Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Industrial Disputes, Australia, (6322.0)—issued annually

Labour Statistics, Australia, (6101.0) —issued annually

The Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0) — issued monthly

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)—issued monthly

Trade Union Statistics, Australia, (6323.0)—issued annually

Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1988 (6325.0)

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0) —issued quarterly

Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia (6312.0) — issued monthly

Unpublished statistics

8. A range of unpublished data is also available on request including dispute details at more detailed industry levels, cross-classified by States/Territories, and finer cause of dispute and method of settlement categories than those published. Considerable time series exist for most variables. Inquiries regarding data availability and associated charges should be directed to Fiona Blackshaw on (062) 52 6561.

9. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

r estimates revised since last issue
— nil or rounded to zero

10. Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

Electronic services

VIATEL. Key *656# for selected current economic, social and demographic statistics.

AUSSTATS. Thousands of up-to-date time series are available on this ABS on-line service through PAXUS COMNET.

For further information phone the AUSSTATS Help Desk on (062) 52 6017.

TELESTATS. This service provides:

- foreign trade statistics tailored to users' requirements. Further information is available on (062) 52 5404.
- Text and tables for selected Main Economic Indicator publications. Further information is available on (062) 52 5405.

Floppy disk service

Selected ABS statistics are available on floppy disk. Further information is available on (062) 52 6684.

GLOSSARY

Cause of dispute

The statistics of causes of industrial disputes relate to the main cause of the stoppage of work and not necessarily all causes that may have been responsible for the stoppage of work. For these reasons, the statistics do not reflect the relative importance of all causes of disputes between employers and employees. The causes are classified from information supplied by employers and according to standards determined by the International Labour Organisation. The classification of causes is as follows:

Wages. Claims involving general principles relating to wages e.g. increase (decrease) in wages; variation in method of payment or combined claims relating to wages, hours or conditions of work in which the claim about wages is deemed to be the most important. Combined claims in which other claims are deemed to be the most important are included under the relevant cause.

Hours of work. Claims involving general principles relating to hours of work e.g. decrease (increase) in hours; distribution of hours.

Leave, pensions, compensation. Claims involving general principles relating to holiday and leave provisions; pension and retirement provisions; workers' compensation provisions; insertion of penal clause provisions in awards.

Managerial policy. Disputes concerning the managerial policy of employers e.g. computation of wages, hours, leave, etc. in individual cases; docking pay, docking leave credits, fines; disciplinary matters including dismissals, suspension; alleged victimisation of union members or officials; principles of promotion and filling positions, transfers, roster complaints, retrenchment policy; employment of particular persons and personal disagreements; production limitations or quotas.

Physical working conditions. Disputes concerning physical working conditions and safety issues e.g. protective clothing and equipment; first aid services; uncomfortable working conditions; lack of, or the conditions of, amenities; claims for assistance; shortage or poor distribution of equipment or material; condition of equipment; new production methods and equipment; arduous physical tasks.

Trade unionism. Disputes concerning employment of non-unionists, inter-union and intra-union disputes; sympathy stoppages in support of employees in another industry; recognition of union activities.

Other. Disputes concerning protests directed against persons or situations other than those relating to the employer/employee relationship e.g. political matters; fining and gaoling of persons; lack of work; lack of adequate transport; non-award public holidays; accidents and attendance at funerals. Stoppages for which no reason is given are also included in this category.

Disputes

2. For these statistics, an *industrial dispute* is defined as a withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work, each withdrawal or refusal being made in order to enforce a demand, to resist a demand, or to express a grievance.

3. A dispute affecting several establishments has been counted as a single dispute if it is organised or directed by one person or organisation in each State or Territory in which it occurs; otherwise it is counted as a separate dispute at each establishment (in each State or Territory) and in each industry in which it occurred. Prior to December 1987 disputes were counted differently (refer to paragraph 5 of the Explanatory Notes for other details).

4. When there is a return to work between stoppages over the same issue, and the return to work is for less than two complete calendar months, the dispute is deemed continuing. When the return to work is for two or more calendar months, the dispute is considered to have ended at the time of the return to work. Should a subsequent stoppage occur, it is counted as a new dispute.

5. Information is recorded concerning all industrial disputes where ten or more working days are lost (see paragraph 1 of the Explanatory Notes). Included in these statistics are the following types of industrial disputes:

- unauthorised stopwork meetings;
- unofficial strikes;
- sympathetic strikes (e.g. strikes in support of a group of workers already on strike);
- political or protest strikes;
- general strikes;
- work stoppages initiated by employers (e.g. lockouts); and
- rotating or revolving strikes (i.e. strikes which occur when workers at different locations take turns to stop work);

Excluded from these statistics are work-to-rules, go-slows, bans (e.g. overtime bans) and sit-ins.

Duration of dispute

6. The *duration* of a dispute is the average number of working days lost per employee involved in the dispute. The duration of the dispute is calculated by dividing the total number of working days lost in the dispute by the number of employees involved (both directly and indirectly).

Employees

7. *Employees* refer to wage and salary earners only. Excluded are persons who are self-employed (e.g. building sub-contractors, owner-drivers of trucks) and employers.

8. *Employees directly involved* are those who actually participated in the dispute in order to enforce or resist a demand or to express a grievance.

9. *Employees indirectly involved* are those who ceased work at the establishment where the stoppages occurred, but who are not themselves parties to the dispute. Employees who ceased work at establishments other than those where the stoppages occurred are excluded. See paragraph 2 of the Explanatory Notes.

10. *Total employees involved* for any period of time are obtained by adding together the number of employees involved in each dispute in the period. For any period of time the figures may include details of the same employees involved in more than one dispute. The longer the period of reference, the more chance there is of some double counting in the number of employees involved.

Where there are varying numbers of employees involved during the progress of a dispute, the figures of employees involved included in the statistics relate to the largest number of individual employees involved on any one day. Generally, the *total* number of employees involved for each year will equal the sum of the total number of employees involved in the first month of a year plus the number of employees *newly* involved in subsequent months. Differences between monthly and annual totals can occur due to the temporary cessation of stoppages which resume in subsequent months. Employees re-involved in this type of dispute are not classified as employees *newly* involved in stoppages in the second period in which the dispute occurs.

Method of settlement

11. Statistics of the *method of settlement* of industrial disputes relate to the *method directly responsible for ending the stoppage of work* and not necessarily to the method (or methods) responsible for settling all matters in dispute. For these reasons, they do not reflect the relative importance of the work of various industrial tribunals operating under State and Federal legislation. The classification of method of settlement is as follows:

Negotiation. Private negotiation between the parties involved, or their representatives, without the intervention or assistance of authorities constituted under State or Federal industrial legislation.

State legislation. Intervention or assistance of an industrial authority or authorities created by or constituted under State conciliation and arbitration or wages board legislation, or reference to such authorities or compulsory or voluntary conference. Intervention, assistance or advice of State government officials or inspectors.

Federal and joint Federal-State legislation. Compulsory or voluntary conference or by intervention or assistance, of, or reference to, the industrial tribunals created by or constituted under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, Coal Industry Acts, Stevedoring Industry Act, and other acts such as the Navigation Act; Public Service Arbitration Act. Intervention, assistance or advice of Federal government officials or inspectors.

Resumption without negotiation. This category may include some disputes which are settled subject to negotiation of a formal nature, such as industrial court hearings. Stop-work meetings are included, and this category may also include disputes settled by 'resumption' as stated, but about which no further information is available.

Other methods. Mediation; filling places of employees on strike or locked out; closing establishments permanently; dismissal of employees.

Working days lost

12. *Working days lost* refer to working days lost by employees directly and indirectly involved in the dispute and figures are generally as reported by parties to the dispute. For some disputes working days lost are estimated on the basis of the number of employees involved and the duration of the dispute.

Working days lost per thousand employees

13. *Working days lost per thousand employees* are calculated from working days lost and estimates of employees obtained from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings and the ABS Labour Force Survey. Refer to paragraph 4 of the Explanatory Notes for details of the break in series.

